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# The Universe and the Green Dragon-Fly's Wing

By MAXWELL BODENHEIM

The universe—chemical speck,
Or fireworks in a pin-wheel effect
Made for the delight
Of a lunatic without hands or feet—
The universe, festering gentlemen,
Does not know that you are training
Straining words with which you elevate
The gasoline, electric, steam
Machines that fill the squalor of your time.
Bill-boards, vaudeville performers
Conjuring trivial quips
From the stomach of vulgarities,
And manufactured articles
With their cheap, insipid elegance—
The universe receives these things
As motes within an hour of typhoid fever,
But you, industrious gentlemen,
Wishing to correct the universe,
Remain within the fever and acclaim
Its freshness and vitality,
And save your sputum for all men
Whose thoughts refuse to welcome
The shoddy, rigid, hoarse delirium.
These men revise your scene
With playful disrespect
Or spread their hearts and minds to one
Sky-rocket guess that lights
The ebony coldness of the universe.

The wing of a green dragon-fly—
Colored instinct released upon air—
Survives in every century
And signals to the universe,
Above the latest brands of heavy rubbish
Made by men to lend variety
To the excrements of fears.

# Ohio and the Seine

By LAWRENCE S. MORRIS

IT may seem paradoxical to assert that American literature is in danger of over-aestheticism. The menace, probably, is not wide-spread. Perhaps it is limited to critics, and has not yet touched poets and novelists. It is certain, at any rate, that among some of the clearest-eyed and most intelligent of our critics an absorption in the functions of literature is leaving a blind-spot in their vision of its nature. These critics realize only too well that no people's expression has value as art until it attains its "significant form." This is, of course, true. The threat of aestheticism, however, sprouts when one forgets that all technical development is a means, and begins to revere it as an end.

In America this attitude is fostered by another current fallacy. There is an assumption among these same critits that in our case the "end" is something already established by European experiments. Because Americans and Europeans labor at the same machines and practice the same political chicanery, it is held that our culture must be identical with that of Europe. This belief underlies much contemporary criticism, and has been stated explicitly in certain reviews. The conclusion to which it leads is inevitably that any contribution by America to literature must be limited to the evolution of "a new art form."

This theory that America is to be exempt from the task every other nation has faced of hammering out its own culture, deserves attention. The critics who advance it speak of "European culture" as though it were one, instead of being a group of allied cultures. The particular one we are to adopt as our own is not specified; yet they cannot be lumped together. Though blood-relatives, they are none of them twins. It is true they struggle in the same industrial system and stave off the same hungers; but these things are raw materials. A culture is built out of them by limiting and the placing of emphasis. Art cannot remain in the general; it must speak through the sharp lines of specialized consciousness.

Each European culture has its distinctive method of attack: its own strategy for driving life into terms that become intelligible values. It is easier to be aware of this strategy than to define it. Yet every one realizes how profound a recognition of man in his social aspect underlies the French consciousness. Based on this implicit limitation, which has become axiomatic, the Frenchman is free to be the most experimental individualist in Europe. This strategy has perhaps diminished for him the stark mystery of the human soul; but it has lighted up with infinite subtlety the relationships between each soul and those others with whom it shares a devouring planet. A foreshortening of life has become a strength in art, by defining the terms of the question. When Anatole France used

the expression, *Le Génie Latin*, as a title, he was not referring to an abstraction. He was acknowledging his debt to a fertile soil of preferences and limitations, in which individual writers of France have always rooted themselves. It is common to the personal agony of Villon and the social poignancy of Georges Duhamel. The English genius, in contrast, has always been essentially anarchistic. It has never assimilated the notion of society; it has lived in the internal struggles of the individual. This lack of social sense from which to diverge has undoubtedly driven the English to protect their ineptitude for communal life with unexampled formality. Concentrating on the arena where the individual is conscious of his own contact with infinities, however, this approach loosed the finest lines of the 16th century dramatists and 17th century prose-writers. Joseph Conrad to-day, in spite of continental bonds, is frankly in this tradition.

Yet France and England fight the same wars, wrangle over unemployment, and see the same plays.

To feel the expressive utility of this foreshortening, let anyone compare the lambent eroticism of d'Annunzio, the divan, *apartement meublé* eroticism of France, and the dense, blind, subterranean eroticism of D. H. Lawrence. Each is thoroughly personal; and in each the distinctive timbre, without which there would be no value, may be traced to the points of emphasis in the local temper.

Forms, as far as they may be analyzed technically, are at the mercy of this temper. It twists, lops, and adapts. The French evolved a form in the comedy of Moliére; but Moliére lifted freely from Plautus. Certainly the contribution of a matured people cannot be narrowed down to any one "art form". The significant thing is the development of an intense and specialized mode of feeling, which expresses itself through all the art forms that people may use. We are interested to know how any people have felt life or what they have thought about it. If their feeling has been barren or their thought commonplace, no technical ingenuity can make them important.

There is, of course, only one subject in literature: human consciousness. It is the artist's job to explore this. In its pure state it is the basic matter shared by all peoples: it is still inchoate, at large, and unmeasured. Gradually a people chooses and emphasizes, wields its unique mode of feeling; in this mode the consciousness-at-large is annealed into expression in art. Without a blood-fused immediacy there is no significance. Values are passionate exclusions. It is this which makes Don Quixote or the chronicle of Hebrew lusts and murders contemporary books, while writers barely dead, such as James Russell Lowell, evaporate into blurred eclecticism. No single facet of existence did they press upon, relentlessly, until it crystallized, burned with its own indomitable quality.

Theories of political internationalism have bred a conception of international literature. A sort of spiritual Esperanto! But only when we draw our own cords honestly, tightly to their pitch, and strike them until they vibrate to the subtlest depths of ourselves, do they sound a note other nations can recognize, and accept or reject. It is this salty, centripetal inten-

sity which produces "international literature." There is an example in France, where Jean Cocteau is pressing hard upon the modern consciousness of Paris. His stripped, insolent sentences are a quintessence; the novel, *Le Grand Ecart,* recently published, is the French consciousness unabated. And referring to this in a letter, Cocteau has remarked, "Plus une pensée se concentre, plus loin elle vibre. C'est le noyau des ondes."

Obviously, we in America have not finished welding our mode. The pioneer spirit has dissipated; Whitman's inclusiveness has become too easy, and his intoning of liberty clangs with rhetoric. We have moved from boyhood into adolescence; we are frightened. Ours is anything but a "gesture of strength." Except in using the inorganic world, we are conspicuous for timidity.

There is a myth that we have suddenly become unafraid. We are supposed to be fearlessly creating. It is true we are incredibly aware of life. We are writing books that quiver with the pain of this awareness. But the essence of these books is still negative: our sensitiveness shrinks, we are too vulnerable. And we remain a gesture of helpless pain, or we protect ourselves in intellectualism.

Particularly in poetry, where creation is forced to be most intense, the wrecks of our vulnerability are conspicuous. T. S. Eliot, with keenest sensibilities and subtle mind, achingly sterile; E. A. Robinson, speculative, irrevocably minor; Bodenheim turning satire into dexterity; imagists giving colored lozenges of consciousness, like the picked-over contents of a broken kaleidoscope; Pound taking refuge in pedantry. These are men who in a native, racy mode of consciousness, might have been creators.

America has tried to swallow all cultures, as millionaires buy old Masters. Suppose we find out what we can digest. The way to our own life lies undoubtedly through this pain of awareness, which at present is all we have. And even this is as yet possessed only by a conscious minority. Beneath lie solid layers of a population which is unaware: still absorbed in the comfort of its body or the excitement of social competition. We are sounding this awareness, rejecting, affirming, kneading it. The process is taking place within us and will be geographically local to us. Now that the pioneer spirit is gone, America has only itself.

Critics and poets and novelists cannot, of course, create the specialized mode of feeling for a people. It germinates slowly in the race, through the intershock of temperaments and ideas. But the conscious minority of artists and critics can quicken it and release its forces, by helping disengage it from confusion. It is important for them to sense it; and it is probably also important for them to blunder and make silly remarks about it, rather than believe they can cable to London or Paris or Vienna for it ready-made.

# The Chambermaid

By MARJORIE ALLEN SEIFFERT

She works in a lodging house
  Where strange folk stay,
The landlady locked them in
  Before she went away.

A careless, sloven chambermaid
  Who opens not a room
But sweeps the dingy hallway
  With a limp, old broom.

The house looks most respectable,
  The door is painted white,
But oh! she fears the lodgers
  Locked out of sight!

For when her work is over
  The chambermaid lies
Listening and shivering
  And can't close her eyes.

A sailor pounds his window,
  A tramp kicks his door,
A little child is lonely
  And sobs on the floor,

And here prays Mary Mother,
  And there weeps Magdalene,
And yonder snores the Pharisee
  Who knows no sin.

The chambermaid is frightened,
  The landlady is dead,
She hates to put her broom away
  And go to bed.

# Fables From Chekhov

*Translated from the Russian*

By JEAN CUTNER STEPHENS

## I---Death of a Government Clerk

ONE fine evening, a certain government clerk by the name of Ivan Dmitrich Wormling was sitting in the second row orchestra of a popular musical comedy. At the height of bliss, through opera glasses he gazed at the stage, smacking his lips—when suddenly....Suddenly his face puckered, his eyes rolled, his breath stopped.... spasmodically he lowered the opera glasses, bent over, and—*Pchoo!*....

Now, sneezing hardly belongs in the category of the seven deadly sins. Peasants sneeze....so do chiefs of police....and even privy councillors ....Wormling, not at all put out personally, used his handkerchief; then, like the well-mannered person he was, he looked about him to see: perhaps his sneezing had annoyed someone....And he found cause for embarassment. For an old fellow in front of him was carefully wiping his baldspot and neck with his glove, the while he muttered to himself. And in this person Wormling recognized General Brizchalov, the head of the joint railway systems.

"That's my fault," thought Wormling, watching the moving hand of the General. "Of course, he's not *my* boss ....But I ought to apologize."

Wormling then coughed, bent forward toward the General's ear and whispered:

"Excuse me, Your Highness! I didn't mean to—"

"Oh, that's all right," answered the General.

"For God's sake forgive me, I didn't mean it!"

"Calm yourself," the General answered, "And please let me attend to the show."

Wormling smiled a confused, silly smile and transferred his eyes to the stage. But without anything like his former absorption. He felt restless, uneasy....

In the *entre-acte* he approached Brizchalov, circled a bit about him and finally, overcoming his timidity, burst out:

"It was wholly unintentional, Your Highness....You know....Not as if—"

"Oh, forget it!" said the General. "I've overlooked it long since." His lower lip moved impatiently.

"Yes, he says he forgot it, but his eyes are damned malicious," thought Wormling, darting suspicious glances at the General. "Doesn't even want to talk about it, eh!....Someone ought to explain to him that sneezing is a most natural process. He might think I meant to spit at him....He doesn't think of it now—but later it will occur to him!"

On coming home, Wormling told his wife of the incident. She took it, it seemed to him, too lightly. At first slightly alarmed, she subsided on learning that the General was not her husband's boss.

"However," she added thoughtfully, "It would do no harm to go and apologize....Or he might think you have no manners...."

"That's just it! I *did* apologize—but he took it sort of funny....Didn't say a single reproving word....Well: after all there had been no time to do the thing right," he murmured to himself consolingly. In order to do this, he decided to stay away from his work the next day.

* * * * * * *

The following day Wormling put on his best suit, took a shave and haircut, and went to the office of Brizchalov. In the General's reception room he saw many people awaiting an audience. Presently the door of the General's office opened and that dignitary appeared on the threshold. While he surveyed the waiting room, Wormling quickly stepped up to him.

"Last night, in the Arcadia Theatre, if your Highness deigns to remember," he began, "Unwittingly I sneezed onto Your Majesty's head....Forgive me, your High—"

"What the devil," the General began; then, recalling the incident, "For God's sake, what nonsense is this!" Turning away from Wormling he addressed himself to another caller: "What can I do for you?"

Wormling paled. "He doesn't want to discuss it," he thought, with sinking heart. "He must hold it against me.... But no! It can't be left this way—I *must* make it clear to him—"

Therefore, when the General turned again toward his office, Wormling took a step after him and rapidly mumbled:

"Your Highness! If I make so bold as to intrude on Your Highness, it is only out of a feeling of regret—even, I might say, of profound regret....It was wholly unpremeditated on my part, I assure you—"

The General, with extreme ennui, waved him away.

"You are pleased to make a joke of the incident, my dear sir," he said, disappearing into his office. The door shut solidly behind him.

"A joke indeed!" thought Wormling, with rising indignation. "Is that his idea of a joke. To think that a man of that rank shouldn't be able to understand....To the devil with him, then! What a specimen! I'll write to him about it, but I shall not again bother to speak to him, by God!"

* * * * * * *

This was what Wormling told himself on the way home from the General's office.

But, much as he tried, he seemed unable to compose a satisfactory letter. He was thus obliged once more to take his way to the General's office.

Then, when the General glanced at him questioningly, without recognition, he said in a pleading voice:

"I was here yesterday, Your Highness—to apologize for wetting the back of your head by sneezing—and *not* to make a joke of it as it was your pleasure to interpret it...."

"To joke about such a thing!" he pur-

sued, with earnestness. "How would I dare! If one should joke about things such as that, what respect could one be said to have for another's person!.... I beg to repeat—"

"Out!" suddenly shouted the General, with blue and shaking face.

"I beg your pardon....?" whispered Wormling, stiffening with terror.

"Get the hell out of here!" the General roared, stamping his foot.

Wormling felt shaken by some cataclysm. Seeing nothing, hearing nothing, his lips moving wordlessly, he backed to the exit and dragged himself home. And when he reached the house he lay himself down and died—without even taking off his best suit.

## II---An Enigmatic Woman

The scene takes place in a first class railway carriage.

On the mauve velvet divan of the compartment reclines a beautiful little woman. An expensive fringed fan crackles in her spasmodically closing and opening hand, and the brooch on her breast rises and falls....She appears agitated....On the divan opposite her sits a county official —a young man who hopes to become a famous writer and who occasionally places, with one of the county newspapers, short stories—or, as he calls them, "nouvelles"—about life in high society. He is gazing at the beautiful lady steadily, with an appearance of a connoisseur. For he is studying, dissecting her enigmatic nature....Trying to reach the point of sensitiveness where he can divine, apprehend even, her every movement....And it does seem as if he were succeeding; in fact, her whole psychology appears more and more obvious to him, and he gazes at her adoringly....

"But I understand you," says the county official and incipient psychologist, kissing the beautiful lady's hand, no higher than the wrist. "Your delicate, engimatic nature seeks an outlet from the labyrinth in which it has found itself....I know! It is a stiff battle, but—do not lose courage! You will yet triumph!"

"Write about me, Valdemar," says the beautiful lady, smiling sadly. "My life has been so full, so varied, so vivid ....But—the principal thing is that I am unhappy....I am a sufferer whom Dostoievski would have revelled in.... Show my soul to the world, Valdemar —that poor, unhappy soul....You are a psychologist. It hasn't been an hour since we first met—and already you *understand* me!"

The budding writer is moved. "Tell me the story of your life! Speak, I beg of you!"

"Very well, then," the beautiful lady assents with a reluctant sigh. "Listen. —I was born in a poor family. My father was a small government official —a good fellow, smart and kind-hearted, but—it was the spirit of the times, of his environment....*vous comprenez* ....I do not blame my poor father.... He drank, played cards....took bribes

....While my mother....” She highs. “Ah, what is one to say! Necessity, the fight for bread, the consciousness of one's social insignificance....Ah, why do you make me recall it all! I had to make my own way....My faulty education; the reading of silly novels; the mistakes of one's youth; my first timid love-affair....

“And the struggle against my environment! Ah, that was indeed horrible! And the doubts, the agony of one's lack of faith in life, in onesself....Ah, Valdemar....You are a writer, a psychologist....You know women.... You can understand....What a misfortune that I was born so temperamental ....I looked for happiness. I thirsted to become a great, a noble nature! Yes—in that only would my happiness lie....” She subsides, a trifle obscurely, but none the less pathetically....

A pause. “How wonderful you are,” the writer mutters, kissing her hand, no higher than the wrist. “You are divine—but I embrace not you but all human misery, all human suffering—— Do you remember Dostoievski's Raskolnikov? He, too, embraced humanity with this—this wide compassion....”

“Ah, Valdemar....What I needed was—why be falsely modest!—what every uncommon nature needs: Fame, glitter, all the beauty and richness of life!....I lived awaiting something extraordinary....something not the common lot of woman....And then—Then a man crossed my path....an old man ....a rich general....Understand, Valdemar, what a sacrifice it was on my part—what a self-abnegation....I could not do otherwise. It benefited my family, it enabled me to travel, to do good to others....But how I suffered; how unbearably degrading the general's embraces were, though—to do him justice—he was ever a good fighter.... There were moments—horrible moments....But I was sustained by the thought that, any day, this old man would die—and then....Then my real life would begin! I would live as I wished: give my life to love, be happy! ....And I *did* find love, Valdemar.... Heaven knows I did....”

The beautiful lady fans herself agitatedly. Her face takes on a dreary, a melancholy expression.

“And then—The old man died! He left me money, I am independent as a bird....Now I could begin to *live, n'est pas,* Valdemar ....Happiness knocks at my door, I have only to take it....

“But no! I am destined not to, it seems! Valdemar, listen, I implore you! Wouldn't it appear as if the time had come for me to give myself to the man I love and who loves me—to become his friend, his ideal, his inspiration!....But see! See how damnably this life is fashioned, how wretched the world is, Valdemar!....And how miserable I am—miserable is not the word! No sooner does the rich old man die—no sooner am I ready to embrace true love and happiness—than my path is again obstructed....Again happiness must escape me! If you but knew what misery it is....”

"But what is it?" he urges. "What has crossed your path? Speak, I implore you!"

The mutilated fan succors the grief-wrecked face of the beautiful lady. "Another rich old man."

Silence. The county official and incipient *literateur* leans his head on his hand, sighs deeply, and profoundly and anxiously gazes at the beautiful lady. The locomotive shrieks and whistles. The setting sun reddens the windows.

# Two Poems

By LOUIS GILMORE

## I---The Shower Bath

Jupiter
Descends
Upon his Danae
In a glittering shower

Against you
When you stand in your bath
The needles are water

I am no Jupiter
Alas

## II---To A Goldfish

Hélas

We may not rightly
Know each other
O goldfish

Our spheres inhibit.

# Ernst Toller---A Product of the New Age

By AARON SCHAFFER

THE *Grosses Schauspielhaus* in Berlin is a grotesquely-shaped structure of hideous red brick situated just off the Karlstrasse, a shabby street in a district rendered even more than usually shabby by the heaps of stones and dirt that bear witness to the construction of a subway down the Friedrichstrasse to the other side of the Spree. The edifice, which originally housed a circus and was converted into a theatre by Reinhardt, is high in the centre and sloping at both ends, the only aperture in the front wall being a single low entrance-way, so that the whole resembles a Cyclops whose eye is placed far down in a tremendous forehead, or, more prosaically, one of the red barns which decorate American landscapes. The interior of the theatre is almost as unusual as is its exterior. The seats of the pit, instead of extending in tiers down to the very front of the stage, are grouped in such a manner as to leave a vast semi-elliptical space open before a stage which, in itself, is of no mean proportions. Above the pit is an immense balcony, divided into three sections, which gives, in the rear, upon a spacious,, though scarcely ornate, lobby. In this thoroughly apposite setting, there was presented, during the early summer of 1922, *Die Maschinenstürmer,* by Ernst Toller, a proletarian drama that merits attention, both for itself and for its author, as a product of the new age.

*Die Maschinenstürmer** was written, as we learn from a statement on the flyleaf, in the winter of 1920-21, in the fortress-prison of Niederschönfeld, where its author, Ernst Toller, had been incarcerated during the German revolution of 1919, and where, as a matter of fact, he was still languishing in July of 1922. The title-page gives us further information as to the play, for we are there told that it is "a drama of the time of the Luddite movement in England—in five acts and a prologue." For the benefit of those to whom the Luddite movement is only, if even, a name, the author states that the time of the play is about 1815 and the locality Nottingham. The persons of the drama are all English—lords, manufacturers, laborers and their families—and the play is dedicated to "the English comrades," of whom two—a female weaver in Lancashire and a "brother-participant in the struggle"—are specifically mentioned. The ensemble is a drama which is thoroughly popular (in the literally etymological sense of the word) and which was presented each night, paradoxically enough, before throngs of typical members of the bourgeoisie, who paid fifty marks and up for their seats, peacefully swilled their beer and ate their "Schinkenbrödchen" during the entr'actes, and only occasionally interrupted the course of the performance to applaud a more than usually bold tirade against present-day civilization.

*Die Maschinenstürmer* is a bitter attack upon twentieth-century capitalism,

*Die Maschinensturner — Ausgabe für das grosee Schauspeilhaus, Berlin, E. P. Tal & Co., 1922.

very thinly veiled in the garb of a pseudo-historical drama revolving about the events consequent upon the introduction of machinery into the weaving mills of Nottingham. The story of the play may be here summed up. In a very short prologue, we are admitted to a session of the House of Lords in Westminster Palace, where a governmental bill inflicting the punishment of death upon all who wantonly practice sabotage (the use of the term here is a conscious anachronism) upon factory machinery has passed its first reading and is up for its second and third readings. A very warm defense of the laboring classes, undertaken by one of the lords, is answered by another, who sees in poverty and starvation divinely appointed tools for keeping down the population (in accordance with the Malthusian theory, actually cited), and the bill passes its second reading with only one dissenting voice. In the first act of the play, which takes place in the poorer quarter of Nottingham, we learn that, as a result of a strike declared by the weavers as a protest against the introduction of machinery into the factories, the condition of the laborers is wretched in the extreme —the men drinking and gaming to drown out their misery, and leaving their wives and children to utter starvation. A mob of workmen appears on the scene, and egged on by one John Wible, the leader of the extremists, hangs upon posts the effigies of two strikebreakers, amidst jeers and the repetition of three stanzas of an ominous song calling upon the laborers to do away with the tyrants and to demand work or death. The last stanza of the song merits quoting in full:

*Auf, auf, auf, und auf.*
*Dem Feind ins Aug gesehen!*
*Vorbei die Nacht, das Licht gewinnt,*
*Das Mass ist voll, der Sand verrinnt,*
*Der Richter sitzt, der Spruch beginnt,*
*Wer wird bestehen?*

The band of strikers is joined by a laborer who calls himself Jimmy, who says that he is a native of Nottingham, who has been tramping England and the continent for years and that he has now returned in search of work. Though he at once counsels against the use of violence in the factories, Jimmy, because of his commanding personality, is admitted into the band of strikers.

In the second act, it develops that Jimmy is a brother of Henry Cobbett, a former laborer who has worked himself up to the position of superintendent in the principal factory of Nottingham and is considered a traitor by the weavers. Open war is declared between the two brothers, and Jimmy is shown the door in his own home. We next meet an aged man, father-in-law of John Wible, who has gone insane as a consequence of the privations he has suffered, and who is obsessed with the desire of shooting God dead. During a meeting of laborers at the miserable hovel of John Wible, Jimmy and Wible stand out as the advocates, respectively, of patience and of violence. Whereas Wible deems the machine the weaver's enemy, Jimmy declares that it can be made his helper, and asserts as the basis of his theory: "Gemeinschaft soll führen, nicht der Mammon! Der Mensch soll führen, nicht die Maschine!" Wible, an utter coward at heart, knowing of the relationship of Jimmy and Henry Cobbett, goes, in the next act, to the factory-owner, and offers, for a consideration, to do away with Jimmy, whom he styles "ein fremdländischer Agitator aus London, ein Kommunist, einer vom geneimen Werk-

schaftsbund." Thereupon ensues a dramatic scene in which a group of poverty-stricken women assembles before the home of the factory-owner, and, amid shouts of "Wir wollen keine Maschine!" "Nieder die Maschine!" pleads in vain with the superintendent to come to the aid of the weavers. Despite an eloquent appeal, in the next act, addressed by Jimmy to the factory-owner to ameliorate the conditions of the laborers, the latter remains obdurate, and the weavers' plot to destroy the machine is secretely perfected. As Jimmy still continuous to preach patience, Wible easily inflames the other laborers against him. One of them, Ned Lud, argues that "die Arbeiter müssen zusammenstehen. Der einzelne ein Halm, den jeder Säuselwind zerknickt Als Masse sind wir mächtig nur." The concluding scene of the play is undoubtedly the most impressive. We are shown the interior of a factory, with a tremendous weaving-machine at which five-year-old children are toiling, and we are reminded, for grim realism, of the stokehold scene in "The Hairy Ape." Suddenly, the mob of strikers bursts in, hustles out the overseer and the children, and after several half-hearted attempts to put the machine out of commission, during which one of the laborers is crushed to death, finally succeeds in its purpose. At this point Jimmy, until now ignorant of the plot to destroy the machine, rushes in in an attempt to divert the strikers from their purpose, but he is greeted with hoots of derision and is struck down by Ned Lud. Mortally wounded, Jimmy prophesies that unless all the laborers of the entire world join to form a "Weltgemeinschaft allen Werkvolks," they will remain slaves to the end of time. In the meanwhile, the coward Wible, who has informed the factory-owner of the exact hour of the attack upon the machine, has slipped off in time to escape the government militia which has come to arrest the strikers. The curtain falls upon Wible's insane old father-in-law, who, seeing Jimmy lying dead on the floor of the factory, thinks he has at last killed the son of God.

As may be surmised from the foregoing resumé, Die Maschinenstürmer is a powerfully frank work—violent, utterly lacking in a sense of humor, bitterly raw in its realism and often crude in its symbolism, amorphous, inconclusive, yet withal not lacking in elements of greatness. The acting is almost always too stagy—one remembers regretfully the reserve of an Eva Le Gallienne in *Liliom*—and the effects are too evident. Naturally enough for a proletarian drama, the outstanding actor is not so much any one individual—although Jimmy stands head and shoulders above all the others—as the mob. It is for the comings, the assemblies, and the goings of the mob that the vast empty space in front of the stage is utilized, and this bit of "property" is handled very skillfully. The mob comes out upon the cleared space from an opening under the balcony, and its gestures are frequently accompanied by the very weird rendition, by an orchestra of a few ill-assorted instruments, of the air of the "Auf, auf" song, which runs through the whole as a sort of "leitmotif." But even the mob scenes are often clumsy; the group of women that cries "Down with the machine!" before the villa of the factory-owner acts with the automatism of a row of puppets or a horde of college freshmen responding to the motions of the cheer-leader. And, most glaring defect of all, the play is full of propaganda.

Everybody preaches something: Wible, mob violence, Jimmy peaceful communism, the superintendent the industrial prosperity of England, the engineer the future dominion of the machine over the universe, and the insane old man the destruction of God. The play is often as raw as a piece of meat torn bleeding from the side of a beef, is as acrid to the taste as would be a piece of raw meat, and is artistic, if at all, only in the sense that a piece of raw beef is artistic—quivering, hot, impressive in its ugliness.

*Die Maschinenstürmer* was clearly the germination, in its author's mind, of ideas that had long been stirring within him. Tangible eivdence of this fact is found in a slightly earlier work of Toller's, *Masse-Mensch** (which, it may be noted in passing, the Theatre Guild of New York is planning to produce during the current theatrical season).

*Masse-Mensch*: *Ein Stück aus der sozialen Revolution des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts* was written in October, 1919, "in the first year of the German revolution," in the fortress-prison of Niederschönfeld, and is dedicated to "den Proletariern." The fly-leaf bears the following semaphoric phrases: "Weltrevolution. Gebärerin des neuen Schwingens. Gebärerin der neuen Völkerkreise. Rot leuchtet das Jahrhundert. Blutige Schuldfanale. Die Erde kreuzigt sich." In a letter to a co-worker, printed as the preface to the second edition, Toller calls *Masse-Mensch* a "visionary drama," which, he adds, burst from him in two days of feverish composition in his prison cell. He had attempted, as a sociologist, to consider men as individuals and as groups acting under given circumstances which are treated as real phenomena. As artist, he looks with considerable doubt upon these "real phenomena," and even asks whether we personally exist. He is convinced that there is such a thing as proletarian art, but only insofar as "die Mannigfaltigkeiten prolterarischen Seelenlebens Wege zur Formung des Ewig-Menschliken sind." As he critically rereads his drama, a year after its composition, Toller is aware of its technical shortcomings, most of which he attributes to the spiritual slavery and chaos of his prison life. Eevn a cursory reading of *Masse-Mensch* would suffice to demonstrate just how chaotic are its form and style*. It is the third of the seven scenes of *Masse-Mensch* that would seem to be the first cast of what was later to become *Die Maschinenstürmer*.

For stark nudity of form, *Masse-Mensch* is perhaps unmatched in contemporaneous literature. Beside so artistically perfect a work as the *Iphigenie* of Goethe, for example, or the *Phédre* of Racine, Toller's *Masse-Mensch* leaves the same impression one might get from a contemplation of the Winged Victory and a plaster-cast of a skeleton side by side. All that has already been said of *Die Maschinenstürmer* applies to *Masse-Mensch*, except for the fact that the earlier production far exceeds its successor for baldness of style, scantiness of detail, and crudity of treatment. And here again, the didacticism that sticks out all over the play as the quills on a porcupine robs it of much of its claim to true art. This is literature with a purpose, the "piece á

*Masse-Mensch, Gustav Kiepenheuev Verlag. Posdam, 1922.

*A résumé and discussion of this play, as well as of Toller's eariler play, **Wandlung**, are contained in an article by Herman George Scheffauer, printed in the September, 1922 issue of **The Double Dealer**.

thése" carried to the nth degree, with the result that literature is here almost entirely obscured by purpose. What saves the two plays is the utter fearlessness of their author and the very evident sincerity with which he attempts to pose and to answer the question as to the ultimate salvation of the proletariat. That the arguments of the representatives of the capitalist class in the play (as, for instance those of Lord Castlereagh in the prologue to *Die Maschinenstürmer*) sometimes sound ludicrously hollow is to be set down not to any desire wantonly to distort facts but to the rather natural bias of a zealous revolutionary.

It becomes clear from a reading of the two plays that Toller concedes the ultimate failure of class or sectional strife, as long as the leaders of the oppressed class or section can not themselves agree upon the weapons to be used in the strife. From the characterizations, respectively, of the Frau and the Namenloser in *Masse-Mensch* and of Jimmy and Wible in *Die Maschinenstürmer*, it is also evident that Toller's sympathies are with the advocates of bloodless revolution, of the creation of class-conconsciousness through education, as over against those who would wish to bring about a catastrophic upheaval. The insistence of the woman in *Masse-Mensch* that the ills of the world can not be healed by the letting of blood remind us that Anatole France had already preached the same doctrine—but how much more gracefully and graciously!—in *Les Dieux ont soif*. If Toller had been endowed by nature with only one grain of humor that inspires the work of the great French master with so warm a glow of life, his dramatic productions might have been more effective. As it is, the painfully stolid seriousness of the two plays, never relieved by even the barest gleam of a smile, render them almost as bare of artistic merit as is a last will and testament, and, for this reason, they are scarcely destined to long life. In these days of constant restlessness, however, the admission, by a professed preacher of the proletarian gospel, that an intolerant mob is as dangerous as an intolerant despot, and that revolutions whose purpose is the mere substitution of one autocracy for another, can not be of lasting benefit to mankind, may serve to fill the intelligent onlooker with the hope that, perhaps, the end of the war is not so far off and that twentieth century man may yet realize the visions of the peace-lovers of all ages.

# Blue

By V. H. FRIEDLAENDER

And is there one more blue
Beyond all these I knew?....
The blue of hills and seas,
Smoke-blue, blue haze on trees,
The violet-blue of eyes,
Morning and midnight skies,
The kingfisher, the jay,
Opal and sapphire ray,
The hyacinth's honeyed head,
Iris and pansy bed,
Strong gentian of renown,
Frail harebell on the down,
Lupin and larkspur plot,
Speedwell, forget-me-not,
And the drift, the dream, the flood
Of bluebells through a wood...
To this abundant store
Now and henceforth one more:
Colour to shake the heart
With that strange glory and smart
Of nameless borders crossed,
Of things half found, long lost.
*Ah, see this burning bright*
*Blue glacier-pure delight!—*
An inch of copper wire
Discarded, tossed in the fire.

# The Stone Cutter

By RICHARD KIRK

A little more than Memory
Will treasure for her own,
O grey old man, O generous man,
You chisel on the stone!

# The Illogic of Stony Stratford, and of Poetry

By ROBERT GRAVES

IN treating of the Illogical aspects of Poetry, I must first make it clear what I understand by Logic, and that is a system of conscious thought deduced from the broadest and most impersonal analysis of cause and effect, a system intended to be followed in all cases of doubt as they arise. The scholastic tradition of logic as finally systematized in the text-books makes no allowance for associative thinking, ridicules, for instance, the ancient notion that medical bane and salve are always to be found growing together, or that there can be any communication of thought between the new Moon and the horseshoe nailed over the lintel.

Poetry, being based on associative thinking, its symbolism being intimately bound up with a vast quantity of logical false premises, logic has had either to systematize and attempt to create a new medium, Classicism, as Aristotle did, or to disown poetry altogether, as Plato did. In ideal Republic there would be no conflicts between individuals, and therefore little necessity for the mental healing of poetry. My general contention is that poetry and traditional logic are in conflict because the analyses on which the present logical system is founded are not exhaustive and need revision.

An example is given in a University text-book of logic of a notorious breach of the rules, a typical *non sequitur*, as follows:

"Well is this place called Stoney Stratford, for never was I so bitten by fleas in my life before."

Here is a clear example of associative thinking on the part of the unfortunate traveller, the point of departure from the logical expression being in the words "Stoney" and "bitten." It is a genuine cry of emotion, and in emotion logic gives place to this associative method of thought, the effect being a mighty condensation of the circumlocution otherwise necessary. Had he felt only a little less bitter against the innkeepers of Stratford he would have been able to control his speech into the following polite channels:—

"Well is this place called Stoney Stratford, for the landlords here have stony faces and stony hearts, and they have left me 'stony', as the saying goes; and the discomfort of my bed! I would have as lief lain out on the stones by the roadside, for there at all events I would have been spared the fleas. In truth I have been badly 'bitten' in two senses, for they made me pay half-a-guinea for a blanket full of fleas and a mattress hard as stones!"

The more condensed version is the method of Poetry and the method of thought in dreams, for which Logic has had for centuries nothing but the sneering patronage of the self-respecting citizen for the grotesque but cheerful village idiot. It is this superior attitude (which, in spite of every attempt at honest thinking, we still inherit from the eighteenth century) that causes most of the confusion in contemporary literary criticism. The *Idiot Boy of*

*Wordsworth* may very likely have been a personal allegory in this sense.

The essence of Poetry lies, I would say, in the unforeseen fusion in the poet's mind of apparently contradictory emotional ideas; they find reconciliation, by regression to a primitive mode of thought, in a common pictorial symbolism and a common rhythmic expression. A ready example from a *locus classicus* would be Aeschylus' phrase of "the sea blossomed with corpses." This compact idea is a reconciliation of the conflict between the fear of death symbolised by the corpses and the love of life as symbolised by the "blossomed." The associative link is here found in the convention that made the sea the "green meadow of Poseidon." Emotional speech, as, for instance, the oratory of statesmen in great national crises, tends to take this same odd form; I do not agree with those who found the most cynical utterance of the War in Lord Carson's commendation of the Bill for Compulsory Military Service, as reported in these words—

"The necessary supply of heroes must be maintained at all costs."

It was a very genuine tribute to the patriotic volunteer ideal which has always had his distinguished support, but he omitted in his enthusiasm the link "conscripts to reinforce" these heroes.

# Crepuscule

By ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
Bless the bed that I lie on
Bring me quietly on your wings
Dreams of pleasurable things.
Let your crowns shed fourfold light
Magically across my night.
Let incense sweet as Araby
Drift from your heavy robes to me,
And like a thousand singing birds
Let me hear your holy words...

But I will forget that you are come
To Paradise
Through martyrdom.

# For The Guitar--with Deep Chords

By MARGARET LARKIN

Nikral worshipped all sad and beautiful things,
And this lavender dusk was a beautiful dusk, and sad,
Wherefore she made a shrine.
She herself was the altar,
The holy elements, lovely and sad, in her eyes.
Only there was no incense, there were no candles,
Nor any intoned replies.

Come, love, out of the purple silence,
Whispering a holy name,
Come, love, suppliant to the altar,
Carrying flame!

# You And I Are Gay Now

By JOHN McCLURE

You and I are gay now
  Who have learned enough
Of the mad and beautiful
  Mockery of love.

Time's a salve for old sores.
  Seasons requite
All the foolish anguish
  And the lost delight.

Love is always beautiful,
  But is seldom true,
And we have eaten wheatbread
  Since we dreamed of dew.

# The Energetics of Poetry

By GEORG KAISER

MAN represents the most intensive form of energy. That man has been able to raise himself to a position of such power throughout the Universe is an emphatic indication of the rank to which he is predestined. A destiny which may be summed up in the formula: to enforce his Will and Himself against all obstacles which may be imposed in his path.

Man is on the way! The distances which he has already covered must remain incommensurable to us—as incommensurable as the road which still stretches before him. It is sufficient to-day for us to know that this movement towards the future is taking place. It gives us occasion to occupy ourselves with conditions and with possibilities.

I regard such an occupation or rather such a preoccupation as this as a matter of imperative necessity. And chiefly for one reason which most emphatically reveals the significance of this epoch.

Humanity of our day must resolve upon this: to regard itself as a state of transition between mankind that is and mankind that is to come. In attempting to defend or justify his present Man acts a pusillanimous rôle. The hungry desire which each of us formulates in his bosom:—I am living *now*, and therefore this life of mine must be final and complete in all its scope and compass—is tinged with the contemptible. Man is really much more courageous than his parasites and camp-followers would have him believe. From his very first day of life onward he carries death in his body and yet what extensive enterprises he undertakes! We know that to-day we are merely the high-potential conduit pregnant with the spark which shall blaze forth only in some distant future. And though we are still wrapt in doubt as to this distant event, we continue to persist and to stand fast without fear or trembling. We do not divert or misappropriate even a particle of this energy. We are concerned perhaps with an unconscious self-sacrificial sense that it be compressed and concentrated, for we feel that upon this the ultimate achievement depends.

What does the human being in our day represent? He is still lacking in any proper co-ordination of his powers. That miracle—the versatility, the manifoldedness of his abilities, is misinterpreted, and so he succumbs to the temptation of training a single faculty or ability. In other words he becomes a specialist.

Man is perfect from the very beginning. He is, so to speak, a finished product from the very moment of birth. The limitations to which he finally succumbs, are not part of his inner nature, —no, these limitations and inhibitions are imposed upon him from without, as a result of the distorted forms to which his destiny is subjected. We are all too well aware that today a man may live only by cultivating one of the numerous possibilities inherent in his nature. We cast no aspersions upon

this brotherman, subject him to no mockery and do not pass him lightly by. Every man is part of our environment —unconditionally and of necessity. The imperative of time decrees his fate; it may misshape him, but it cannot crush him to the point of annihilation. Every phase of transition bears within it the command of eternity. And this confers immortality. For all things that have a goal preserve themselves. The sum of energy suffers no atmospheric depression or lightning stroke.

Man emerges from this epoch, an epoch which is unconscious of the fact that all its powers may be concentrated in one gigantic effort—and strides onward to an epoch in which our chaotic dismemberment and futile activities will seem like some impossible fable. Upon what must we base our knowledge of potential man? I think I have found the solution. It lies in this one word: Poetry. For I am of the opinion that all-inclusive force which is one of the faculties peculiar to man, finds for the time being its most convincing expression in the processes of poetry. For here we find the proofs of man's prestabilized consummation, something which he must raise from the realm of the unconscious to that of the conscious. What path does he pursue? What is his task? And what is his goal? Poetry in its larger sense comprehends the province of all the faculties and subjects them to the law of a single mode of operation. The idea emerges triumphantly out of the fortuitousness of appearances and the chance element of the subject matter. And this idea is in itself a rounded whole, a world, something present yet timeless, something present, yet eternal. Comprehended by men and comprehensible in fact only to them. Man is the Whole, ever here and ever there, ever distant and ever near—ever existent, ever present. Poetry proclaims Man the Synthesis!

I am convinced and I have emerged still more convinced after being subjected to the shock of many contrary opinions, that man will overcome the economic difficulties which now curtail and confine him. I do not underestimate this task, but I am determined not to regard it as inachievable. There are too many proofs of man's skill and cleverness in adapting himself. We have the eight hours working day—we shall be able to do with still fewer hours in spite of an augmented standard of comfort, an internal progress will always keep step with the outer progress. Ideas have an irrepressible urge to represent themselves. For that which is not visible is not there. It is through man that the idea pushes its way towards representation. Man is its creator, man gives it its form and its face and the final clarification can be won only in this way. Let us not forget Plato who has given a living form to his dialogues, nor Nietzsche who bids the sharply plastic figure of Zarathustra become vocal, nor Christ who gave the Son of Man undying vitality.

Energy as a means unites ideas and vitality into a unity. Vitality and the idea are said to be unconquerable, postulated and heterogeneous entities. But this is untrue: There is nothing without man: Merely because man exists all things must be of man and for man. How the achievements of man based upon his own peculiar energy and maximum effort, how this combination of vitality and idea may be realized—

that will be a problem to concern the generations which come after us and whose forbears we must be in humility and in sacrifice.

We need not fear of incurring the danger of following a phantom or some false instinct. Man is not piece-work, but a well-planned whole as even the ancient myth recognizes. And yet it is astonishing how far we have left the Greeks behind in this matter. Their experiments with man content themselves with the superficial. Marsyas succumbs to Apollo. Marsyas blew the flute and puffed up his cheeks to globes which destroyed the symmetry of the human countenance. Apollo on the other hand played the lyre with a magnificent grace. More than this, the Greeks found the vision of a sculptor revolting, for he annihilated his work in dust and in the sweat of his brow.

How wonderfully subtly the Greeks sensed the incongruity of the overoccupied man, the man who exercises *one* action in a measure and proportion exceeding that ordained from the beginning. Man is a unit. That which before our time was imperfectly divined, today we *know* it, as we know a law and the validity of a law. It is not only by his externals that a human being, whose humanity is based solely upon one activity, provokes an unpleasant impression, there is also an inner distortion which is no less painful than the outer. Man may also sin against himself in thought alone. For every excess of one faculty which develops itself at the expense of the neglect of the others, is a mortal sin. It is directed against the universality of man and mutilates universality into specialty. Man is not hand or foot or eye or head alone. Man is compact of head and heart and brain and blood. He who only thinks and writes poetry commits a wrong against the Totality, precisely as does the workman, who by a pressure of one of his limbs, operates a part of his machine.

The most dangerous onslaughts against Totality have hitherto been undertaken by the intellectuals—though we must not forget that they have been exposed to the fiercest temptations. A prophetic glance into what is in process of Being and of Coming characterizes the intellectual. It is difficult for him to refrain from describing much, even though he may not have seen much clearly. And the thing which is thus darkly seen is then given the name of philosophy or literature. So will our present be judged of the future. To us it is only given to see this present and to bring the signs within us into relation to the Infinite.

Poetics are one form of energy, perhaps the most powerful which we possess today. Having once established this, we may proceed to build up our new system of esthetics. The system which has hitherto prevailed, compact of fear and pity as to the effect of the poetic message, no longer exists so far as we pioneers are concerned. We base our judgments only upon the strength or the weakness of the energies proceeding from the creator of the poem . And once more we find a parallel with the ancient Greeks. To them destiny was the supreme power. It suffered no single exception, it destroys the continuity of the whole. The man who summons all his strength for *one* deed which is not based upon a perfect consummation is given over to destruction. The whole of the Idea was disturbed.

What do our motions, profoundly perturbed by the drama, convey to us—to us whose souls have always been full of this somber knowledge? Thus poetry inscribes only negation — warnings against advances in one direction only —a destruction of the smooth sphere of the human into a hunchlike protuberance—deformity! The lesson which we are taught at the close of all great poetry is that all that is tainted with hypertrophy finally seeks its own compensation. We have seen that man's position when it is dependent upon a single activity, becomes a prison of degeneration, of error and disease and that the only way to liberation is the way of universality.

Let us consider everything that man does an operation of energy. Energy is the eternal wonder in man and this wonder has been converted into blood out of which he creates; creating even himself. Man is that reality which renders all things possible including himself. He draws eternity into the present and lets the present open upon eternity. This goal is achievable. And it will be achieved. This is certain: that the Whole of his faculties will develop itself —liberated from the specialized instances of his occupation. Talents and patents disappear—all things are open to all men and the specialty merges into the totality. Economics and hygiene prepare him for his task. He goes on his way with that grim energy which has already liberated him from slavery. He will not suffer being delayed. The progress of the individual will be overtaken by that of the generality. The mountain becomes a plain. Fit for the homes of all men. And it is then that energy will operate terrestrially and with sublimation. Man has arrived!

It is not so important that man should be able to do something as that he should be recognized. Man that is recognized becomes at last a vision—and this in turn ceases to be vision and becomes a reality. And I say this thing with the mouth of a man, a mouth which like all men's bears in it only a human tongue, I believe in this man to come and belief is enough. For once we have belief we have the building of the cathedral whose roots are anchored deep in the earth and whose finials exfloriate in the heavens.

# Duet

By JOHN MC CLURE

"Fetch us no airy rhymes.
We are god-fearing men.
Bring us the keys of life."
"Abracadabra, then."

# Grasshoppers

By GORDON LAWRENCE

The meadow is green with summer
And yellow with the yellow sun and pollen,
And beset by splashing grasshoppers like a hailstorm,
Innumerable as Assyrian armies,
Helmeted, bucklered, like Roman centurions,
Stiff with armor like medieval horsemen,
Lacquered and enamelled like samurai
In bamboo fighting dress,
Incessantly charging the tall grass stems
Like Egyptian charioteers ambushed in a Nubian forest;
Dust brown, grass brown, dead-leaf brown,
Marsh green, lily-bud green, caterpillar green;
Here the red-thighed, black-armored leaper
(Soft armor on a feeble warrior),
There the cone-headed grotesque
(With his head a casque out of Babylonia,
Surmounted by antennae like spider silk).
The grasshoppers shimmer their tissue-paper wings,
Flaunting pennons of red and burnt orange,
Checkered and barred like the flags of dead kingdoms,
And, sprawling after flight,
Staring at one another with their big eyes,
They show no change of emotion
On their Greek comic masks of faces.

# Fang To Explains the Futility of Knowledge To a Bookworm

By PAUL ELDRIDGE

Mass shadow upon black shadow,
O learned Tsi,
Shall it ever rise,
Majestic,
Like the Tall Mountain
That watches
The round water
Of the Yellow Lake?
Shall it ever press
More heavily
Earth's patient face
Than the withered petal
Of an old rose?

# Reviews

## JEAN TOOMER

(*Cane by Jean Toomer. Boni and Liveright* 1923)

THE Negro has given to America its only beautiful folk poetry. "Cane" may be a landmark in American literary history because it represents the injection into our polite letters of the emotional ecstasy of the black man. Jean Toomer, a poet in whom many racial strains are mingled, owes to his Negro heritage the two salient characteristics of his work; ecstasy and music. Primarily an artist, a spectator of the human tragedy, free from bitterness, free from the sense of persecution, uplifted by a fine tolerance, he writes without rancor, occupied only with the production of that which he believes to be beautiful or significant.

"Cane", I hope, is the fore-runner of work which will profoundly enrich American literature. Real ectasy is the state of mind most seldom found among writers. The Negro has it, for he knows, as few Caucasians know, the love of God—what Arthur Symons has said is the only unending intoxication in the world. Jean Toomer shares in this intoxication of the black man, though his God is not the God of the Jubilee songs. Perhaps Wordsworth's or Whitman's.

This racial significance of Jean Toomer's work, however, is not all. "Cane" is the first book of a poet, only twenty-seven years old, who is as indubitably a genius in prose as any man now writing in America. *The Double Dealer* was fortunate in being able to print three of the entries in this volume, "Calling Jesus," under the title of "Nora," "Storm Ending", and "Harvest Song," before Jean Toomer became generally known through his contributions to the magazines.

Waldo Frank (who has influenced Toomer too much) says of "Cane" in his introduction: "It is the harbinger of a literary force of whose incalculable future I believe no reader of this book will be in doubt." In "Karintha", "Calling Jesus", "Becky", and "Fern", certainly, Jean Toomer accomplishes effects that Sherwood Anderson at his best might envy. Strangely beautiful phrases, lyrical and harmonious, that one encounters in "Cane" mark Jean Toomer as a potential master of style. He introduces a new element into American literature. One hopes he will continue in his natural course, uninfluenced by current fads, toward the consummate work of which he is capable. I believe that work, if it is to be satisfactory, must be lyrical prose and not the short story. The short stories in "Cane", especially those which show the influence of Waldo Frank, are infinitely below the chants and croons. Jean Toomer is a poet, not an annalist.

Some of the work in "Cane" will not be received in a calm spirit by many readers in the southern states because of their inflexible mental attitude on the subject of race and sex. Those of intelligence, however, will not allow their instinctive rebellion at certain episodes to mar their appreciation of the artistry. Jean Toomer is not the foe of the South and he is not a propagandist. He does not war on our institutions. He would be the first to admit that "Becky"—

"Becky was the white woman who had two Negro sons. She's dead; they've gone away. The pines whisper to Jesus—"

is an isolated example—one among thousands—in the Southern states. As the strange chant points out, she was a "poor-white crazy woman." Southerners will rebel more at "Bona and Paul".

Waldo Frank, who knows no more about the South than he knows about Afghanistan, asserts in his introduction to "Cane" that "This book is the South." This, of course, is as foolish as saying that a cupful of salt water is the Atlantic ocean. No book by Jean Toomer or by anyone else can be the South. This volume reflects the Negro's South. Jean Toomer derives from the South and the South is in his work. The feel of southern air, and southern twilight and southern pine is in this book more than in the work of any all-Caucasian writer that I know of. But "Cane" reflects the black man's life and not the white man's in the South. "Cane" is the black man's life interpreted by a poet with finer sensibilities and more cultivated taste than any who has yet attempted it—the black man's life interpreted from the inside. But it is first of all a lyrical volume. What is in this book is first of all Jean Toomer.

Certain of the sketches which reveal the tutoring of Waldo Frank and reflect his chaotic later style are weak. Most of the poems are faulty in versification, or diction. But "Cane" as a whole—taking inventory of the finest sketches, the most beautiful isolated passages and phrases—reveals a writer of almost supreme promise. He may not arrive at complete fulfillment. But there is excellent accomplishment here already.

For harmony of language and beauty of imagery consider the following brief extracts:

"Karintha carrying beauty, perfect as dusk when the sun goes down".

"Pine needles are smooth and sweet. They are elastic to the feet of rabbits."

"Smoke is on the hills, Rise up.
Smoke is on the hills, O rise
And take my soul to Jesus."

"A single room held down to earth....O fly away to Jesus....by a leaning chimney..."

"Caroling softly souls of slavery,
What they were, and what they are to me,
Caroling softly souls of slavery."

"Bring dreams of Christ to dusky cane-lipped throngs."

"And her slim body, white as the ash of black flesh after flame."

"The air is sweet with roasting chestnuts, sweet with bonfires of old leaves."

"..the little dog is left in the vestibule, filled with chills till morning. Some one... echo Jesus...soft as a cotton boll brushed against the milk-pod cheek of Christ, will steal in and cover it that it need not shiver, and carry it to her where she sleeps upon clean hay cut in her dreams.

"....Some one ...echo Jesus...soft as the bare feet of Christ moving across bales of southern cotton, will steal in and cover it that it need not shiver, and carry it to her where she sleeps: cradled in dream-fluted cane."

"Do not shrink. Do not be afraid of me.
*Jesus*
See how my eyes look at you.
*the Son of God*
I too was made in His image.
*was once——*
I give you the rose.....
*"JESUS WAS ONCE A LEPER!"*
Dan steps down.
He is as cool as a green stem that has just shed its flower."

And the last two lines of "Storm Ending":

"Dripping rain like golden honey
And the sweet earth flying from the thunder."

After reading "Cane", with its splendid promise, one hopes that Jean Toomer will devote himself to pure lyricism, in which he excels, and abandon the short story and objective criticism of life, in which he does not. He succeeds in fiction only when that fiction is lyrical expression of mood or sentiment.

J. M.

## THE BLIND BOW BOY

(*The Blind Bow Boy, by Carl Van Vechten, Afred A. Knopf,* 1923.)

THIS new novel by Mr. Van Vechten is amusing, perverted and trivial. You scoff as you read but you read. What gives the books its distinction is the absence of the idea of sin though Dresden china figures and figurines go through the paces of what would be called sinfulness by Oscar Wilde and the Baptists.

There is a good deal of Huneker in Mr. Van Vechten. Like the underrated and overrated James Huneker he carries his encyclopedias jauntily. Both are able to impart a feeling of long familiarity with music and pictures and queer arcana that awes us yokels, still in the raw state of "culture". Both lack originality and imagination, torturing their invention to play substitute to these ineffable qualities.

The *Blind Bow Boy* is or should be naughty enough for any jaded taste. Harold Prewett not hero so much as dummy to carry plot is not seduced from his altogether respectable young bride by a brazen siren of the circus tent and kept drama but is perverted or converted to the Duke of Middlebottom's philosophy. Campaspe Lorrillard was, in her feminine way, already a convert, his lordship a high priest. Surely if the full import of this book were explained to Messrs Sumner et al. but let it go at that. The artful ingenousness of it all carries the day. We will take Mr. Van Vechten's sworn statement that the book is meant as entertainment only.

Campaspe, the heroine is altogether delightful as is her name. I fell in love with her at the bottom of the page. Oliver Drains adds to our gallery of valets. Mr. Van Vechten has done an amusing novel, story, what you will. The sort of trifle we wish some of our *serious* novelists would endeavor to copy.

J. W. F.

## WHO'S WHO IN AMERICAN POETRY

(*American Poetry Since* 1900, *by Louis Untermeyer Holt,* 1923)

THIS volume is a revised version of "The New Era in American Poetry", by the same author. In the six years that have elapsed since the publication of "The New Era," some of the poets appraised therein have either grown or diminished in prominence, or in Mr. Untermeyer's estimation; while other poets have subsequently acquired a vogue sufficient to warrant their inclusion—whence this revised version, with most of its chapters "either new or entirely rewritten."

A work of this sort is primarily an anthology: it aims at being representative and comprehensive. Mr. Untermeyer's is both. It is also a piece of criticism. In which case the basis of selection is the taste of the author.

As Mr. Untermeyer says in a preface to the present volume, "It is inevitable that any appraisal (of contemporary poetry) should be incomplete and, since individual taste is the prompter that directs the voice of judgment, the author can explain his résumés and omissions only by admitting his unavoidable bias....What is the critic's praise but the delight of Narcissus at

seeing his own face in the pool; what is his displeasure but his failure to find that flattering image?" But though this apology of Mr. Untermeyer's disarms his critics, it disarms Mr. Untermeyer as well—for surely what is there said applies generally. Expressions of taste different from Mr. Untermeyer's own are, therefore, privileged.

I shall not quarrel with the limitations to Mr. Untermeyer's taste, but with the extent of it. Within its limitations, his taste is catholic, too catholic. One is not surprised at his delight at seeing his own face in the pool; nor his displeasure at failure to find that flattering image—what is unexpected, surprising, is the number and variety of pools in which he is able to see it. Frost, Robinson, Lindsay, Masters, Aiken, Miss Teasdale, Miss Millay, Mrs. Wylie, the Benets, Oppenheim, Giovanetti, Santayana,—all sorts and conditions of pools in which Mr. Untermeyer is able to see himself, however partially or distorted. For if there are not too many poets included in the volume, there are too many of which the author is able to say something in praise,—Vachel Lindsay, for instance. (Why not Walt Mason and Edgar Guest?) But this fault, if fault it is, is a generous one and a sincere; a fault moreover in the critic rather than in the anthologist, since Mr. Lindsay has been loudly acclaimed and is, therefore, "representative."

For when all is said, there is no one better qualified than Mr. Untermeyer to write on contemporary American poetry. A poet himself, and of the movement, he knows his subject; his interest in it is such that he is never perfunctory; and the vigor and clarity of his analysis and style carry the reader across the occasional waste-lands of subject. Such is Mr. Untermeyer's persuasiveness that at times one catches one's self on the verge of agreeing with him, against one's better judgment, as in the chapter on Frost.

In his estimates of Carl Sandburg and Miss Lowell there is less, or no, occasion for discord. From the chapter on Miss Lowell I quote her poem—

PROPORTION.

In the sky there is a moon and stars;
And in my garden there are yellow moths
Fluttering about a white azealea bush.

Throughout the volume, the characteristics qualities of each poet are accurately observed and recorded; often summarized in a phrase or epigram.

LOUIS GILMORE.

## SEA CHANGE

(*Sea Change, by Muna Lee. Macmillan*, 1923)

CERTAIN of the poems in "Sea-Change" make it unquestionable that Muna Lee is a rare emotional lyricist. On the strength of the best work in this volume, she takes her place naturally with Sara Teasdale and Lizette Woodworth Reese. Some of the contents of "Sea-Change," to be sure, is not so good, though for a first book it is surprisingly well edited. Very few of the verses are actually faulty. There are, as in the work of all young poets, some disturbing echoes and a number of poems in which the intensity of feeling seems to have marred the artistry. Technically, the greatest weakness of some of the lyrics is a lack of internal harmony in the line and phrase, the song swinging simply on accent and rhyme. This defect, when noticeable, is largely compen-

sated for by vigor of expression, imagery, sincerity and strong emotional content. The best work in "Sea-Change" is extremely satisfying.

The following extracts (by no means the best) are representative:

"In a world earthquake-shaken, lightning-charred,
Love is the hardest where all things are hard."

"I make no question of your right to go—
Rain and swift lightning, thunder, and the sea,
Sand and dust and ashes are less free!
Follow all paths that wings and spread sails know,
Unheralded you came, and even so,
If so you will, you may take leave of me,
Yours is your life, and what you will shall be.
I ask no questions: hasten or be slow!"

"I shall not sing again of love—
I weary of the old unrest.
(But like a hangman, Love has set
His crimson emblem on my breast;)"

"The stars are colored blossoms on a storm-shaken tree,
The moon a wanton sheperdess that wanders apart."

DIRGE

"Though you should whisper
Of what made her weep,
She would not hear you:
She is asleep.

"Though you should taunt her
With ancient heart-break,
She would not listen:
She is awake.

"Passion would find her
Too cold for dishonor,
Candles beside her,
Roses upon her."

CHOICE

"I set on this barren board
(Yours is the choice, not mine)
The bread and leeks for your hunger's ease,
The unacknowledged wine.

"No protests—no demands—
Always there shall be
The driftwood fire that warms your hands,
The stars you will not see."

SPRING

"And in my heart
A root long-buried
Puts forth a delicate frond."

OUT OF MY TURBULENT DAYS

"Out of my turbulent days,
Out of gray grief and black wrong,
Out of the passion and stress,
I shall make me a song.

"I shall make it light as a bird,
As free and as bold,
So it may tell me what youth was,
When I have grown old."

These are not the best poems in "Sea-Change". One could select a score of passages and nearly a dozen lyrics as good as these and some better. There is excellence of a rare order, in whole or in part, in these lyrics from which I have not quoted: "Mellilot," "What Is Love Like?" "As Helen Once," "Lips You Were Not Anhungered For", "I Am So Glad That You Are Dead', "A Woman's Song", "A Song of Happiness", "Mid-Western", some of the sonnets in "Foreword", and others, including "San Cristobal" which appeared last year in *The Double Dealer*.

J. M.

## A MYSTIC MARRIAGE

(*Masters and Men, by Philip Guedalla. Putnam's*, 1923)

THE opening essay in Mr. Guedalla's new book, *Masters and Men* is a discussion of one of the late phases of literature, under the title of "The Egoists." With much humor and some malice he describes the autobiographical literature of the present day, its authors "grimacing with the self-consciousness of nasty children, press round us with an insistent exhibition of their sins, their complexes, their secret sorrows." The rest of the book

is made up of brief critical studies of the books and authors.

The rise of a new literary school is always a matter of interest, and the study of its origin and development is well worth while. Mr. Guedalla is himself one of the principal representatives of a new school, one which may prove to be a tidal wave of importance compared to the gentle ripples created by the autobiographical novelties. Ever since history began to be written the historian has eschewed humor, even in its most innocuous forms; and the satirist has collaborated to the extent of shunning history as he would the plague. When a Voltaire, a Swift, or, at a later date, an Anatole France wished to make his audience smile at the antics of governments he picked some mythical land, some Island of Penguins, where, unhampered by dates, dynasties, or delicacy, he could give free reign to his fancy. This condition of things did no harm to the Voltaires, the Swifts, and the Anatole Frances, to be sure, but it was responsible for some terribly dull histories. How many people can remember that once with childish curiosity and confidence they took from the shelf the first volume of Green's *Short Hisory of the English People,* or Grote's, *History of Greece,* or Guizot's, *History of France,* to mention three of the "Gs," only to acquire a life long disgust for anything known as history.

Mr. Guedalla knows quite as much about history as most of the old school historians. This was amply demonstrated in his *"Second Empire."* His ability as a political writer was displayed in *The Industrial Future,* while *Masters and Men* gives some idea of his critical insight in literature. Moreover he has brought to these dry-as-dust professions, a sprightliness and charm which make his books worth reading even by one whose only desire is to be amused. History, politics, and criticism will cease to be the hobby-horse of student-specialists and will be groomed for the all-comers contest if Mr. Guedalla's school survives.

One often reads a paragraph with the remark, "I've often said that myself"; but how seldom and with what joy one says, "*I wish* I had said that myself." You will find much in *Masters and Men* which you have said yourself, but never quite in the way that Mr. Guedalla says it. For my own part, the chapter on Switzerland called "The Soldiery", pleased me the most. I have visited that country several times and have amused myself by making fun of the land and its people. Yet upon reading, "apart from the distinction of contributing Zwingli to the last page of every encyclopaedia, it wears singularly few honours in the European record ....the national Valhalla....must con tain little beyond the unheroic figures of MM. Nestlé and Suchard....Yet one discovers with half a shock that the upper valleys of the Alps were not always populated by a race ready to oblige with an echo or some *edel-*

*weiss....*;" my little jokes about the Swiss railways being in reality only subways; and speculations as to whether Switzerland isn't really larger than the United States if it was only ironed out flat; seem a bit wanting in vigor. His remarks about the biographer and his quotations from the *Life of Monseigneur Darboy,* Archbishop of Paris, are priceless. "His biographer strove gallantly to remind us by scraps of French that the scene was laid in France. He even observed, a shade unkindly, that Darboy 'was always the piece de resistance of a large circle.' But when he speaks of a lady's 'picadillos' he creates a grave doubt as to whether he means a small variety of bull-fighter or a central part of London." Other essays on Viscount Grey, Lieutenant-Colonel Repington, Max Beerbohm, Mr. and Mrs. Webb, the critics, Disraeli, George Saintsbury, Dean Inge, and Chesterton are worthy of particular praise.

It must be repeated that with Mr. Guedalla, this humor clothes a keen critical knowledge. In no sense is it pure horseplay, but its use is to gain a hearing for true scholarship. At the present time Guedalla and Lytton Strachey are the leaders of a movement which may some day make readable, books on the most obtuse subjects. It is impossible to visualize how far this movement may go. Is it a mystic marriage of Momus and Clio which will be followed by further delightful if bigamous relations of this most charming of the Gods and all the daughters of Appollo? If so Strachey is the presiding priest, but the little cupid above the nuptual couch is Guedalla.

IRVING GUMBEL.

## EVAPORATION

*(Evaporation, by Mark Turbyfill and Samuel Putnam. Modern Review,* 1923.)

EVEN the critics who lean rather sympathetically toward modern art—Mr. Craven is one—are inclined to point out the limitations of abstractionism in painting, which are generally the contradictions involved in supposing that a highly individualized form, such as the verse of Samuel Putnam reaches for in this book, can ever multiply itself and found what is called a tradition in the arts. The irrelevancy of the "ideational" in poetry, which Gorham B. Munson reminded us of a year ago with perhaps too great a sense of discovery, is a part of the questionable program announced and performed by the authors of "Evaporation." The ideational meanings of words, fettering ordinary mortals with clay feet to an earth-bound logic, are the very lines of thought that "cross to produce the crucifying jazz of the ages:"

"The daily crucifixions of matter must be penetrated and evaporated to be known as the highly decorative procession of shadow-patterns that they really are. These in turn are but the gauzy ghosts and deliquescent replicas of Beauty herself."

It is impossible not to credit the sincerity of these two poets. Coming out of Chicago, where the stench of writhing flesh and the hoarse cries of an in-

articulate civilization throw the sensitive mind back on a discordant pluralism, "Evaporation" tries for a unity beyond the immediate contacts of life and emerges as a kind of grotesque Platonism. Perhaps they are aware, heedless, that a Platonism which ignores the ethical implications of the Idea, or the Immutable Types, becomes an abstract intellectualism that had better take to mathematics or suffer the risk of falling into platitude or gibberish: "highly decorative shadow patterns", stripped of emotional flexibility, cannot be presented in words; the medium is mathematics.

In spite of the gyroscoping platitudes in the introductory "Obstetric of the Idea," Mr. Turbyfill is enabled to offer "Coryphee", "Apples", and "The Metaphysical Botanists"—and "Dalliance before Destruction", like an Elegy from Propertius. Mr. Putnam, in his "Kitchen Symphony" and "Seductions of a Mirror" is so far beyond me that I fear I can reach him only with the weak tentacle of a smile:

> "Arrogance is a masque contemptuously flung
> over a mirror pompously hung
> on the frivolous humility of space.
> . . . . . .
> The metaphysics of a rape
> I'm sure would set you all agape.

"It seeks the esoteric mating of the opaque," as Putnam puts it himself. But there's another side to the question: "Evaporation" is a bold and briliant experiment. It may not have any permanent significance for poetry, but it is certain that the authors committed themselves to mortality knowing precisely what they were about.

ALLEN TATE.

## MR. LAWRENCE'S LATEST

*(Kangaroo, by D. H. Lawrence. Thomas Seltzer, 1923.)*

THE background of Mr. Lawrence's latest novel, "Kangaroo", is Australia. Against this unfamiliar ground, is projected a set of characters that the reader of Mr. Lawrence's fiction will immediately recognize as typical. So that when Richard Lovatt Somers, "a strange little bloke", and Harriett, his wife, "so blissfully unconscious of people on the other side of hedges", both new from England, move into a bungalow in suburban Sydney and become acquainted with Jack and Victoria Calcott the couple next door, the reader of Mr. Lawrenc's fiction knows the sort of situation to expect. Nor is he disappointed, for in the following chapter—"When Somers entered the living room at Wyewurk (the Calcott bungalow), Jack looked up at him with a smile and a glow in his dark eyes, almost like love."

However, the reactions of Jack and Somers to each other, and of the Calcotts and Somers generally, are subsidiary. It is with the introduction of Somers to Kangaroo that the plot emerges.

Kangaroo is not a Kangaroo but a man who reminds you of one. He is head of a secret political organization, which aims to set him up as a sort of dictator so that he may regenerate Australia—why this is desirable or in what way it is to be done is left nebulous.

Jack takes Somers to see him. Here, in part, is Somers' impression of the man: "A wonderful thing for a sculptor. For Kangaroo was really ugly: his pendulous Jewish face, his forward stooping shoulders, his round stomach in its expensively tailored waistcoat and dark grey, striped trousers, his very big thighs. And yet even his body was beautiful, to Somers—one might love it

intensely, every one of its contours, its roundnesses and downward-drooping heaviness. Almost a grotesque, like a Chinese Buddha. And yet not a grotesque. Beautiful, beautiful as some half-tropical, bulging flower from a tree."...." 'Why the man is like a god, I love him', he said to his astonished self. And Kangaroo was smiling heavily and ambiguously to himself, knowing that Somers was with him."

There are several subsequent meetings between the two, which end usually in rows.

Later, when Kangaroo is shot in the abdomen during a political riot, he sends for Somers. The death-bed scene is in the core of the novel. Somers holds back from Kangaroo, as previously he had held back from Jack. "Yet he wanted *some* living fellowship with other men; as it was he was just isolated. Maybe a living fellowship!—but not affection, not love, not comradeship. Not mates and equality and mingling. Not blood-brotherhood. None of that....Some other living relationship—But what? He did not know. Perhaps the thing that the dark races know: that one can still feel in India: the mystery of lordship. That which white men have struggled so long against, and which is the clue to the life of the Hindu. The mystery of lordship. The mystery of innate, natural, sacred priority. The other mystic relationship between men, which democrary and equality try to deny and obliterate. Not any arbitrary caste or birth aristocracy. But the mystic recognition of difference and innate priority, the joy of obedience and the sacred responsibility of authority." Yet when the dying Kangaroo says to Somers "You've killed me. You've killed me, Lovatt! Say good-bye to me. Say you love me now you've done it, and I won't hate you for it." Somers turns his face aside and says "No, I can't say it."

With the death of Kangaroo, Somers and Harriett wait for the next steamer to America, for a change. As Harriett observes to Jaz, Jack's brother-in-law, of her husband "You'd think to hear him he was nothing but a tea-pot brewing metaphysical tea. As a matter of fact Kangoroo went awfully deep with him, and now he's heart-broken, and that's why he's rushing to America."

In the delineation of his curious characters and the handling of his peculiar situations Mr. Lawrence is infinitely adept. The portrait of Kangaroo is masterly. And Somers, Harriett, Jack, Victoria, and Jaz (introduced, probably, for variety) are all vivid and sharply personal. The "feel" of the country, too, is admirably given through Somers and Harriett's perception.

Here, too, are all the peculiarities of Mr. Lawrence's manner—the conversational style; the lyric flight; the tone of high seriousness often at variance with the thing treated; the frequence of image, not always so effective as the following: "he felt a long navel string fastening him to Europe."

What hurts the story is the too frequent insertion of chunks of description and repetitive dialogue. Clogging, also, are the chapters (in the nature of a movie flash-back) of Somers' reactions during the great war; the chapter called "Bits"; and the clumsy intrusion of the first person at the beginning of Chapter XV. With these eliminated,

the book, though shorter, would be more complete.

LOUIS GILMORE.

## ALMOST A FALL FROM GRACE

(*Americans, by Stuart P. Sherman. Scribner's* 1923)

IT was about the year 1917 that Professor Stuart P. Sherman began, according to his own statement, "to meditate rather frequently upon the relation between civilization and the existence of separate nationalities, national traditions, national sentiments, and the national literatures through which the life of vanished generations survives as a living power among the powers of the present day." And at the end of these six years of meditation and seclusion he has brought forth another book and another preface to show the world that he can live through spiritual crises in the manner befitting a good American.

Soon after he had entered upon this new national period of his, it disturbingly occurred to him that "an inflamed and egotistical nationalism" might be the "prime cause of the world's catastrophe," and that the higher piety of "true citizenship might necessitate the sacrifice of one's essential Americanism." But, as happened to another pious hero who is most often mentioned in the same breath with arms and shores of Troy, so there appeared to Professor Sherman in apocalyptic vision his *diva mater,* his *almo parens,* breathing sweet comfort in his ear, revealing the secret that not Helen of Troy nor yet the United States of America was the real cause of war, but rather the inclemency of the gods was to blame. And so Professor Sherman wrote a pamphlet which was obtainable on request from the War Service Committee on Public Information: an appeal, he said, to those who were neither hot nor cold. And now he takes for his text the admirable paradox that "the most powerful agents for the corruption of the world's civilization are corrupt national civilizations; yet they are still the most powerful instruments for creating it." This striking antinomy convinces him that "the friends of Humanity will make less progress by attempting to destroy the national spirit than by criticizing it and purifying it....With this program in mind no wise student of the national past will be an indiscriminating upholder of traditions. While seeking to conserve their vital energy, he will steadily subject their direction to a critical scrutiny in *the best light of his own time.*" But on the fourth previous page Professor Sherman had conversely declared that his intention in writing this new book was to encourage readers "to scrutinize contemporary literature *in the light of their national past*" (the italics are not Professor Sherman's). It is to be hoped that no inconsiderate physical theory of light as a form of wave motion will here step in and mar the metaphor. Nevertheless, it often is the case that two rays of light playing upon and mingling with each other produce black darkness in which nothing is visible; this phenomenon is called *interference.*

Professor Sherman's Americans are Franklin, Emerson, Hawthorne, Joaquin Miller, Whitman, Carnegie, Carl Sandburg, Roosevelt, Henry Adams and Mr. Paul Elmer More. These men interpret the traditions of our country as Professor Sherman would have us see them. He would not conceal from his readers the weighty transatlantic influences

that contributed so largely to making at least the first seven of them what they were: he even states that "no aspiration is more thoroughly American and traditional than cosmopolitanism." The strange thing is that while English, Scotch and even French influences are admissible if not laudable in these chosen cosmopolitan nationalists, Professor Sherman can do nothing more for other literatures than just to raise a patriotic yawp from his lair near the banks of the Wabash railway and cry anathema on "the Scandinavian misanthropes, the German egomaniacs, and, above all, the later Russian novelists, crazy with war, taxes, hunger, anarchy, vodka, and German philosophy." Germans are particularly bad men in Professor Sherman's opinion. He did not think much better of them in the year 1917, when he credited Mr. Paul Elmer More, in the introduction of a book dedicated to that editorial benefactor, with responsibility for the most profoundly illuminating utterance he had ever heard from living lips: Mr. More was disputing Goethe's concept of the devil as the spirit that denies: the spirit that denies, Mr. More thought, is God. This utterance of Mr. More, thought Professor Sherman, is the most profoundly illuminating I have ever heard from living lips.

Well, that was six years ago. And though Professor Sherman has not changed his mind about Goethe's posthumous countrymen, he has begun to wonder if he was not rash in considering Mr. More's lips to be living ones. Mr. More has retired from the world of average men and has gone to glory with Plato: Professor Sherman, being a humanist, loves and knows carpenters better than he knows and loves Plato. Tenderly, but with conviction, Professor Sherman has handed Mr. More down from his pedestal. And "Americans," for lack of another Lancelot, is dedicated to the queen-bee.

Backsliding is said to be impossible for anybody but a Methodist. Professor Sherman once spent a whole year instructing youths of that persuasion at Northwestern University, Illinois. But as a backslider he can not compete with Professor Pattee, in 1909 the author of "Elements of Religious Pedagogy"; in 1923, one of our foremost expositors of Menckenism, Professor Sherman's great illusion.

HANSELL BAUGH.

# Beyond

By STELLA HEILBRUNN

What though the purest effort fails,
O wailer of a thousand wails,
Though faring justifies your fears,
Wayfarer of ten thousand tears—
Beyond the traps men make and set
Life lives in naked beauty yet.

# Noli Me Tangere

By JESSICA NELSON NORTH

Touch me not now, for I am not yet unbound
From the blue-girded robe of sleep.
Kiss me not yet while about my head the charms
Of that strange journey hover.
When you speak you dissolve a music frail and deep,
In your arms
I forget my great eternal lover

(Whose coming was as a wide door
Set open in the shadow of a hill
Where men went in at dusk, weary and ill
And some returned no more.)

But some there are who carry in a smile
The secrets of that place.
Touch me not yet. Grant me a little while
To think upon his face.

# The Arena

By ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH

Encore!
The dancer turns
To meet the audience's baiting of applause
His bent head partly hides his heaving chest,
His heart that strikes out savagely at the ribs—
The stage sways under him like a sharp deck
Storm-tilted, and the outer darkness foams
With faces
And with hands inexorably commanding.
Encore!
They beat their will against his drumming ears
Encore! encore! encore!
He straightens up
Smiling, throws back the hair across his eyes
And staggers into the tense intricacies
Of motion.

# Books Received

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